

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A Ni/metal hydride secondary element comprising:
a negative electrode ~~containing~~ comprising a hydrogen storage alloy,
an alkaline electrolyte, and
a positive electrode operably connected to the negative electrode by the
electrolyte and formed by a bulk material mixture in a three-dimensional metallic conductive
~~structure, the positive electrode comprising within said bulk material nickel hydroxide, cobalt~~
~~oxide, and~~ an aluminum compound soluble in the electrolyte, ~~nickel hydroxide and cobalt~~
~~oxide, and~~

wherein the aluminum compound is provided as a coating of Al(OH)₃ on the
surface of at least one of the positive electrode and the nickel hydroxide such that the
aluminum compound becomes dissolved into the electrolyte and modifies surface portions of
the positive electrode when the element is charged.

2. (Original) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein the aluminum compound is in the positive electrode in an amount of about 0.1 to
about 2 % by weight based on the weight of the nickel hydroxide.

3. (Currently Amended) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in
Claim 1, wherein the aluminum compound is selected from the group consisting of aluminum
hydroxide, and/or aluminum oxide, and combinations thereof.

4. (Currently Amended) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in
Claim 3, wherein the content of the aluminum compound aluminum hydroxide and/or
aluminum oxide is between about 0.5 and about 1.0% by weight based on the weight of the
nickel hydroxide.

5. (Original) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the positive electrode further comprises an additive selected from the group consisting of lanthanoid oxidic compounds, Y_2O_3 , La_2O_3 , $Ca(OH)_2$ and mixtures thereof.

6. (Original) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in Claim 5, wherein the amount of oxidic compounds does not exceed about 9.0% by weight based on the weight of the nickel hydroxide.

7. (Original) A button cell formed from a Ni/metal hydride element according to Claim 8.

8. (Original) An AA battery formed from a Ni/metal hydride element according to Claim 1.

9. (Currently Amended) A Ni/metal hydride secondary element comprising:
a negative electrode ~~containing~~ comprising a hydrogen storage alloy,
an alkaline electrolyte, and
a positive electrode operably connected to the negative electrode by the
electrolyte and formed by a bulk material comprising a mixture of ~~in a three-dimensional~~
~~metallic conductive structure, the positive electrode comprising within said bulk material an~~
~~aluminum compound soluble in the electrolyte, nickel hydroxide, and cobalt oxide, and an~~
~~aluminum compound selected from the group consisting of aluminum oxide and aluminum~~
~~hydroxide in powder form, and~~

wherein the positive electrode is substantially free of $Ca(OH)_2$ and/or Yb_2O_3 , and wherein the aluminum compound becomes dissolved into the electrolyte and modifies surface portions of the positive electrode when the element is charged.

10. (Currently Amended) A Ni/metal hydride secondary element comprising:
a negative electrode ~~containing~~ comprising a hydrogen storage alloy,
an alkaline electrolyte, and
a positive electrode operably connected to the negative electrode by the
electrolyte and formed by a bulk material in a three-dimensional metallic conductive
structure, the positive electrode comprising within said bulk material an aluminum compound

soluble in the electrolyte, nickel hydroxide and cobalt oxide, such that upon charging the element, the aluminum compound dissolves into the electrolyte and forms a thin, porous and/or ion-conductive film of Al(OH)_3 on surface portions of the positive electrode.

11. (Original) The Ni/metal hydride secondary element as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the film has a thickness of about 0.03 μm to about 0.1 μm .

12. (Currently Amended) A method of forming an active positive electrode in a battery containing a negative electrode and an electrolyte comprising:

mixing ~~an aluminum compound soluble in the electrolyte~~, nickel hydroxide, and cobalt, and a powder of an aluminum compound to form a bulk material;

forming the bulk material into a three-dimensional metallic conductive structure;

operably connecting the three-dimensional metallic conductive structure to the negative electrode by contact with the electrolyte;

causing portions of the aluminum compound to dissolve from the structure into the electrolyte by charging the battery; and

forming a thin, porous and/or ion-conductive film of Al(OH)_3 on the surface portions, thereby activating the positive electrode.